

Israel proposes Palestinian currency model

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Finance Minister Avraham Shohat has put forward the model of the Scottish pound for a symbolic Palestinian currency in the occupied territories during the five-year interim period of autonomy. "We don't think the currency must be the shekel or the dollar." Scottish banks issue their own pound notes with the same value as the pound sterling, but the Bank of England is the controlling authority. Mr. Shohat leads the Israeli delegation in talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Paris on economic aspects of the implementation of the Sept. 19 autonomy deal. Israeli sources in Paris have predicted an economic agreement as early as next week while talks on security issues have hit the rocks and are only due to resume Monday after lengthy bickering. "The atmosphere is good," Mr. Shohat said of the Paris sessions.

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Iraqi official in Turkey for oil talks

ANKARA (R) — A senior Iraqi official arrived in Turkey Friday for political talks on a Turkish-Iraqi oil pipeline closed since the Gulf crisis in 1990, the Anatolia news agency said. Iraqi Foreign Ministry Under-Secretary Riyadh Al Qayad said at Ankara airport that he was ready to discuss any topic. Turkish officials would bring up. Turkish officials say the talks will mainly deal with the matter of emptying the twin oil pipelines from Iraq's Kirkuk oilfields to Turkey's Mediterranean terminal at Yumurtalik. In line with a U.N. embargo on Iraq, Turkey shut the pipelines soon after Baghdad invaded Kuwait in August 1990. It wants to draw an estimated 9.2 million barrels of oil trapped inside the pipes to prevent corrosion. The pipelines must be flushed and refilled for correct maintenance until regular flow is resumed, Turks say. Around 5.7 million barrels of oil belongs to Iraq and the rest is owed to Turkey. Foreign Ministry Hikmet Cetin has said the U.N. Security Council would decide on the disposition of Iraq's share. Ankara urges Iraq to comply with U.N. demands to scrap its weapons of mass destruction so that the oil and trade embargo on Baghdad can be lifted.

Jordan and PLO sign economic agreement

3 days of talks produce framework for Jordanian-Palestinian ties

By Wafa Amr
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — After three days of arduous deliberations, Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Friday signed an economic cooperation agreement setting forth relations between the Kingdom and the "liberated Palestinian territories" during a five-year interim period.

The economic agreement, a compromise between basic Jordanian and Palestinian positions, comprises a broad framework for cooperation in the fields of banking and money, trade, labour force, investment, tourism, customs and tariffs as well as security and border issues and resources.

This agreement has been the culmination of strenuous and long efforts that we both engaged "seriously in," Dr. Javad Anani, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Minister of Information, said. "I can say it is a very good agreement, which is the start of a new phase of continued and practical cooperation and coordination."

Dr. Anani, addressing a press conference, focused on the practicality of the accord and the difficult task it took both sides to actually arrive at

signing it after a long delay. The original pact was jointly drafted last September. It was amended in October. But PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's justification for delaying ratification of the draft agreement was that he could not commit himself to any agreements before he was assured of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho and before the Palestinian authority was established in the "liberated Palestinian territories."

The takeoff point for the week's negotiations which led to the economic accord was the PLO's agreement to put off the issue of confederation until Palestinians living in the occupied territories regain their right to self-determination and free choice.

Last week, His Majesty King Hussein called on the PLO to drop the word "confederation" and put it off until Palestinians could choose their relationship freely without any imposition from the leaderships.

Mr. Nashashibi said the PLO agreed that confederation "would be determined by the free will of our two peoples at the right time and that the economic agreement was a major phase leading to that constitutional relation."

Dr. Anani explained that Palestinians and Jordanians

should concentrate on coordination now and on developing relations because both have more pressing issues to deal. "Thank God, we have set the basic foundation on the right path leading to practical and serious coordination which can be translated into practical steps that will positively affect the national interest of the Palestinian people, the Jordanian people and joint interests of both peoples," Dr. Anani said in the joint press conference he held with Mohammad Zuhdi Al Nashashibi, chief of the PLO's Economic Department, following the signing ceremony.

Dr. Saeed Al Tal, deputy prime minister, minister of higher education and head of the Jordanian delegation to the economic talks with the PLO, signed the economic agreement with the head of the Palestinian delegation, Farouk Kaddouni, at the Foreign Ministry Friday noon. Arguments on the wording continued until the last minutes before signing.

"It took both sides a lot of effort and long hours before reaching this agreement which reflects no contradictory wishes but unified aspirations that reflect the linkage and unified interests of people East and West of the River Jordan.



Deputy Prime Minister Saeed Al Tal (right) Friday shakes hands with Farouk Kaddouni, Foreign Minister of the PLO. (photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

tensive coordination and activating the joint committees which would be dealing with pressing issues stated in the agreement as priorities.

Mr. Nashashibi stressed that agreement had been reached on close and intensive coordination in pushing the peace process forward in a way that would safeguard the interests of the two countries, especially the implementation of Palestinians' rights to return, to self-determination, and to setting up. They also said they have agreed on continuous and in-

state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Dr. Anani said the accord meets the aspirations of both peoples and their expected challenges. It also takes into consideration factors of implementability and execution on the ground, he said.

The time spent on deliberations during the past three days has given both sides ample time to discuss issues in detail which created joint understanding for the nature of developments and to enable us to

Both sides voice satisfaction and pledge closer coordination

include ideas that could be implemented rather than words that cannot be translated into action," he said.

Dr. Anani said it was of utmost importance for both sides to reach this economic agreement at this period of time because of "tremendous pressures exerted on Jordan, and many attempts that aim at driving a wedge and ending the Palestinian-Jordanian relationship, which would lead us, God forbid, to different and separate ways which would not help either of us to reach our objectives."

King Hussein had issued a "last chance" warning to the PLO to coordinate with Jordan before it was too late to save the comprehensiveness of the Middle East peace negotiations or attempts to isolate the PLO from the rest of the Arabs.

"We have insisted on changing some articles in the original draft. We ended up with minor changes and slight modification in the wording," said one PLO official. He said some of the original draft's articles were removed completely since they were not considered priorities that have to be dealt with during the interim period.

Dr. Anani said that banking

observers said Jordan obviously compromised on the issue of banking in return for the PLO's signature. PLO officials said minor amendments were made to the original draft which appeased the PLO's desire for recognition. The PLO's main objection to the Jordanian-Israeli memorandum of understanding concerning the reopening of Jordanian bank branches in the West Bank was that the banking

agreement neglected the Palestinian authority in the occupied territories and bypassed the PLO as the political authority there, according to PLO officials. This economic pact, they said, recognised the Palestinian authority in the territories and it became a partner to the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) in reopening bank branches in the West Bank.

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(Continued on page 5)

Britain not seeking to destabilise Libya

VALETTA (AFP) — Britain is only trying to ensure the fair trial of the Lockerbie bombers and is not seeking to remove the Libyan government. British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said here Friday. "We are not involved in seeking to destabilise or change the government of Libya," Mr. Hurd told journalists after meeting with Maltese leaders. "We believe there should be a fair trial." Mr. Hurd currently on his way back to London after a visit to the Middle East (see page 3), also warned that the Middle East must avoid a "sterile period" in the peace process because "time is not on the side of peace." He added the arrest in the Gaza Strip was not going to last forever and that negotiators must persist in their talks.

Top Libyan official visits Tunisia

TUNIS (R) — Major Khalfi Hamid, a member of Libya's five-man leadership headed by Muammar Qaddafi, is in Tunisia for talks. The PLO and Israel agreed Thursday to resume talks in the Egyptian Red Sea resort on

Israel frees 101 Palestinians in 'goodwill' gesture for peace

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel released 101 Palestinian prisoners on Friday in a goodwill gesture on the eve of the resumption of autonomy negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the army announced.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal described the move as symbolic, claiming all those freed had only a few days left to serve and supported the peace process.

But Palestinian sources said of the 47 Gazans who were let out, four had been between six and 19 months of their sentences remaining, 18 had from one to six months and 25 just a few days.

No breakdown was immediately available for 54 prisoners from the West Bank, but their Gaza colleagues said some also had many months left to serve.

After a week of bickering, the PLO and Israel agreed Thursday to resume talks in the Egyptian Red Sea resort on

Sunday or Monday to try to implement autonomy in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Mr. Shahal said no decision had been taken on further releases among the 11,000 Palestinians in Israeli jails.

"Everything will depend on the discussions which will cover this area," Mr. Shahal told Israel Radio.

Lists have been drawn up detailing age, health and sentence and prisoners would be released accordingly when the government gave the green light, Mr. Shahal added.

The army said that those released Friday belonged to the PLO's mainstream Fatah organisation led by Yasser Arafat. It said that only those "without blood on their hands" were being let go.

All had been convicted in military courts before the Sept. 13 signing of the Israel-PLO autonomy accord.

No members of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and Islamic Jihad

were among those released, nor were followers of leftist groups within the PLO that are fighting the autonomy plan.

Freedom for Palestinians held in Israeli prisons has been a key demand of the PLO from the start of negotiations.

The army said before Friday's release 4,958 Palestinians are held in military prisons and another 3,200 are held in other jails. The Mandala Institute, a human rights group based in the West Bank town of Ramallah, estimates, however, that Israel holds 11,700 Palestinians.

The prisoner issue is only one of a myriad of problems worrying negotiators trying to bridge gaps in the Gaza-Jericho plan.

Under the agreement, an Israeli troop withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho was to begin on Dec. 13 but it has already been delayed.

The main issues dividing the sides are the size of Jencho, control of border crossings, and security arrangements.



Muaiq Abdul Ghani (left), a Palestinian prisoner released Friday, is embraced by his brother in the Gaza Strip (AFP photo)

Moi says Sudan talks going well

NAIROBI (AFP) — Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi said Friday that preliminary Sudanese peace talks held here had gone well following meetings among Khartoum government negotiators, rebel leaders and four African foreign ministers.

The talks were hosted by Mr. Moi as chairman of a six-member regional group, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD).

This week the foreign ministers of Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda, the four IGADD members chosen by the organisation to broker peace in Sudan, met the leaders of two rival factions of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), John Garang and Riek Machar.

The stabbing took place at a busy intersection in French hill, a Jewish neighbourhood abutting the main road to the city's northern Arab suburbs.

Police arrested 10 Jewish settlers on the West Bank overnight after a roadblock protest which led to scuffles with soldiers, military officials said Friday.

The brief statement gave no details about the outcome of the meetings, intended to form a basis for subsequent talks.

Mr. Moi said he was "personally pleased with the outcome of the meeting" and was "especially happy that the Khartoum government was represented."

The Executive Committee, meeting since Sunday under

PLO urges dissident factions to end rift

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leadership on Friday urged all Palestinian factions to bury the hatchet and start a broad dialogue ahead of autonomy in the Israeli-occupied territories.

The PLO Executive Committee said factions in the occupied territories and abroad should rally around a "common denominator" as their "first national authority in modern history" was becoming reality.

In a statement published by the Palestinian news agency WAFA, it said they could work to recover completely their "inalienable rights of return, self-determination and an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital."

"Join hands to build our national entity... and let love guide our behaviour and our relations," the Executive Committee said.

But 10 hardline Palestinian groups, including several PLO factions, on Wednesday announced a united leadership in Damascus to defeat the September autonomy accord and also agreed to boycott elections after self-rule begins.

The Executive Committee, meeting since Sunday under

the chairmanship of Yasser Arafat, also hailed an initiative by a delegation of leading Palestinians who had asked for democracy in the PLO and a Palestinian dialogue.

The PLO executive body confirmed its "attachment to the principle of democratic dialogue, political pluralism, freedom of thought and the practice of democracy."

The pro-democracy lobby, headed by Haidar Abdul Shafi, said Thursday it had failed to curb Mr. Arafat's "monopoly" on decision-making in the peace negotiations with Israel, blaming Executive Committee members for showing no interest in making joint decisions.

Mr. Kinkel said he had formed his impression after talks in Bonn on Thursday with international mediators Lord Owen of Britain and Norway's Thorvald Stoltenberg.

Mr. Kinkel will host a Bonn summit starting on Saturday between Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and the mediators, who represent the European Union and the United Nations respectively.

In Ovcarac, Croatia the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Madeline Albright, shaken by a visit to a mass grave for as many as 300 people believed executed by Serbs, said that the world must know the "dreadful story."



British secretary hopes for realistic peace agreements in 1994

Hurd pledges to seek to address Jordan's economic concerns

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd ended a visit to Jordan Thursday saying he was optimistic that "realistic agreements" between Israel and the Arabs could be signed during this year.

Addressing a press conference shortly before his departure, Mr. Hurd said Jordan was not near to signing a peace agreement with Israel and faced a lot of work before an accord could be drawn up.

Mr. Hurd, who held talks with His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and other ministers, said the British government appreciated the economic problems faced by Jordan and would explore means to help address the Kingdom's concerns.

Specifically, he referred to British help for water development projects in south Jordan and said the assistance was reviewed during a meeting he held with Minister of Water and Irrigation Hisham Al Khatib earlier Thursday.

There is a "continuous dialogue and relationship between Jordan and Britain perhaps closer than any other Arab countries..."

Mr. Hurd said Britain stood ready to help Jordan alleviate its foreign debt burden as well as supply equipment to the Kingdom's Armed Forces. He did not elaborate.

The foreign secretary said he also appreciated Jordan's grievances over the overzealous enforcement of the sanctions against Iraq, causing serious repercussions on the Jordanian economy.

"There are certain very specific practical problems on shipping that were explained to me," he said, referring to the costly delays and higher freight charges that Jordanian importers are facing as a result of the inspection procedures adopted by the enforcers of the sanctions patrolling the Red Sea.

"We are strongly in favour of the correct and strict implementation of the sanctions, but it needs to be regular, reasonable and not simply bureaucratic," Mr. Hurd said. The reference included Jordan's complaints that applications for U.N. approval for the export of sanctions-exempted Jordani-

an products to Iraq were being held up while Turkey and Iran, Iraq's two other neighbours, did not face such problems.

"There are examples where the Jordanians feel that the process is not reasonable and it is simply bureaucratic," Mr. Hurd said. "These are things that we can pursue."

"...The British government believes in strict implementation of the sanctions, but reasonable implementation of the (Security Council) resolutions which exist," he added.

Mr. Hurd said that he also raised the issue of a Jordanian ban on imports of British meat products imposed after reports of the "crazy cow disease" in Britain. He argued that all Britain's other major trading partners had accepted that the problem was resolved and that British exports were "safe," but "there is still a problem" in Jordan. He expressed hope that the issue would be resolved soon.

Mr. Hurd, who arrived here Wednesday after talks in Lebanon and Israel, following an earlier visit to Syria, said there could be no reversal of the Middle East peace process and that there was a will on all tracks of the Arab-Israeli negotiations to go forward.

"Both Britain and Jordan are looking forward to the completion of the peace process," he said. "No one pretends that it is going to be easy..."

Mr. Hurd described as "understandable" Israel's justifications for continuing to occupy parts of South Lebanon on "security grounds," and said: "As I understand it, Israel is ready to withdraw. Israel has no wish to add to her territory by taking in Lebanese villages or Lebanese countryside."

"I believe that, as a result of my discussions in Beirut and with the Israelis, it should be possible to reach an agreement on (the Lebanon-Israeli track), that will pave the way for the full implementation of the Taif agreement for the full recovery of Lebanon of territorial independence."

Mr. Hurd was referring to an inter-Lebanese accord reached in 1989 under Arab League and Saudi mediation in the Saudi resort town of Taif, providing for the departure of all foreign forces, including the Syrians and Israelis, from Lebanese territory, in stages, leading up to the full exercise of Beirut's sovereignty over all of Lebanon.

There is a will to go forward and I believe that in 1994 there will be a reasonable chance of that will expressing itself in realistic agreements," he said. "I cannot be certain, but that is not just my hope, it is a probability."

Britain was not acting as an intermediary in the peace process and it feels now that the parties involved in the Middle East are in direct contact if it is up to them to reach and implement agree-

ments, he said.

"We can help by making available our skills," he said; and referred to a British pledge of \$100 million to help the Palestinians develop their building infrastructure. The aid is outside the British contribution to about \$600 million pledged by the European Union (EU).

Answering a question from a British reporter whether there were "major obstacles" holding up a Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement, Mr. Hurd said:

"On the Jordan-Israeli track, obviously there is still work to be done. Much has been achieved... so there is not yet a paper to be signed. His Majesty the King explained to me that he is anxious to do the work before the signature and not to sign before the work."

"I understand the reasons for that. That is his policy and I respect that."

Mr. Hurd described his visit to Jordan as aimed at getting "some perceptions, some ideas (and) some impressions from here which I cannot get from elsewhere (because of an) informality borne out of long friendship."

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MILITARY VISIT: His Majesty King Hussein Thursday attended a celebration marking the 43rd anniversary of the First Royal Armoured Battalion and inspected display of documentary pictures relating the development of the battalion and lists of martyrs. In a brief speech to the officers and troops, the King congratulated them on the anniversary, urged them to acquire training and be ready to defend the homeland in the face of any danger. King Hussein said he took pride in his armed forces, the shield of the nation. He said that the anniversary should serve as a day of remembrance of the martyrs who fell in defence of their homeland.



Information Minister Jawad Al Anani (left) meeting with the German parliamentarians Thursday

German deputies leave after meeting planning and information ministers

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two German federal parliamentarians Friday wound up a several day visit to Jordan and left for Damascus on the third leg of their tour of the Arab region.

Peter Kittelman and Dandward Bunwitt discussed the Middle East issue and the peace process with Information Minister Jawad Al Anani on Thursday, the last day of their visit.

Dr. Anani explained the chairman's views, the German parliamentarians urged Jordan to pursue the peace process and said peace was bound to benefit all peoples of the region.

He also pointed out that the government was coordinating efforts with the Palestinians to reach the aspired settlement.

In reviewing the consequences of the 1967 war, Dr. Anani said that the Kingdom

has shoudered heavy burdens and spent no less than \$16 billion as a result of the displacement of the Palestinians and their flooding the east bank of the Jordan River.

The two German parliamentarians Thursday met with the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lower House of Parliament and discussed the Middle East and Palestine.

After hearing the committee chairman's views, the German parliamentarians urged Jordan to pursue the peace process and said peace was bound to benefit all peoples of the region.

In discussing democracy, they said Jordan has an example in democracy by its free parliamentary elections.

Committee Chairman Abdul Hadi Al Majali voiced Jordan's

appreciation of Germany's continued economic and technical assistance to the Kingdom.

The parliamentarians held a meeting with Planning Minister Ziyad Fariz who outlined his ministry's role in socio-economic development of Jordan since the 1950s.

Noting that German assistance to Jordan was contributing to the country's development, the minister said the Jordanian economy was a free market economy that encourages foreign investments.

Mr. Kittelman said that he would call for continued supply of economic and political aid to Jordan by various world countries, especially the European Community to help Jordan continue its peace efforts and to enable the Kingdom to meet the challenge.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Farhan reelected IAF secretary general

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Islamic Action Front's (IAF) executive office Thursday selected Ishaq Al Farhan as its secretary-general, and Dr. Abdal Latif Arabyah as deputy secretary-general. The office also selected Mohammad Oweidah and Ahmad Tanash as administrative and financial assistants respectively. The executive office also accepted the resignation of Abdul Rahim Ekour, who was elected in absentia as member of the executive office. The office named Ziad Khalifah, the first alternate member, as Mr. Ekour's replacement.

Special education training course ends

AMMAN (Petra) — A seven-day training course on "developing methods for teaching gifted students" concluded here Thursday. The course included lectures about characteristics of gifted children, modern trends in developing appropriate curricula for gifted children, methods of developing innovative skills and problem-solving techniques, and stimulating questions that help gifted students think critically. Taking part in the course were teachers from the Ministry of Education, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) schools, the armed forces schools, Salt Pilot Centre and representatives of private schools, in addition to the Jubilee School.

Handicapped children begin winter camp

AMMAN (Petra) — A winter camp for handicapped children will be held in Waqqas town in the northern Jordan Valley region as of Saturday. A total of 50 handicapped children from centres in various refugee camps are participating in the camp which is organised by the United Nations Refugees and Works Agency (UNRWA).

Masri heads society for freedom

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Society for Enhancement of Freedoms and Democracy has elected a seven member administrative committee, headed by Speaker of the Lower House Taber Al Masri. The other committee members are Salah Jarrar, Muayad Nihayr, Nazik Bitar, Sultan Hattab, Jasser Tadros and Adnan Toubasi. The society was established in March 1993 to enhance democracy, promote public awareness about the concept of democracy and to work towards ensuring freedoms and human rights. The society's founding members are Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, Taher Masri, Awad Khleifat, Kamal Al Qasim, Adel Abu Khajil, Assad Abdul Rahman, Salah Jarrar, Taleb Al Rifai, Nazik Bitar, Jasser Tadros, Sultan Al Hattab, Adnan Toubasi and Muayad Nihayr.

Jordan reduces illiteracy rate from 22% to 15%

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan has succeeded in reducing illiteracy rate of persons above the age of 15 to 15 per cent by the end of 1993, down from 22.5 per cent in 1988, thanks to the intensive adult and literacy education programmes adopted by the Ministry of Education, according to Mr. Ahmad Al Soud, senior Education Ministry official.

Care for educating adults and illiterate persons started in Jordan as early as 1952, when the ministry decided to open literacy and adult education classes in urban and rural regions, said Mr. Soud. Noting that programmes in this regard have been continuing ever since, Mr. Soud said that in the past seven years these programmes were intensified and spread at the national level.

Indeed, the recommendations of the 1987 Jordan national conference on education included special provisions for the care of the illiterate and their training in special centres run by the ministry, he added.

This year, the Kingdom has, 687 literacy and adult education centres providing basic education to 11,580 male and female illiterates noted Mr. Soud.

To prepare for this intensive campaign, the Ministry of Education has trained 600 full-time teachers to shoulder the task of providing basic education to the illiterates of Jordan, he pointed out.

It is due to these strenuous efforts which yielded excellent results that the ministry won the 1993 international award assigned by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) for

Women seek changes in labour legislation

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian Women's Union (JWU) Thursday announced the formation of a follow-up committee to formulate the necessary amendments to the labour law with regard to women's rights.

The final draft will be presented to Parliament for consideration.

The recommendations will tackle the most serious violations of women's rights in the labour law, according to Ifat Halasch, director of women's department at the Ministry of Labour.

During a two-hour lecture at the Phoenix Gallery, Ms. Halasch pointed to the dire need to change the labour law in light of the recent developments and social changes that occurred in the society.

"The number of women joining the labour force is increasing dramatically while legislations and laws have not been amended to reflect these changes," Ms. Halasch said.

"The condition of women at work are still unacceptable due to discriminatory laws and regulations."

Ms. Halasch referred to the inequality between men and women at work, especially in wages, and noted that women were being illegally exploited when given lower salaries than men.

Ms. Halasch said that after presenting these recommendations, JWU will cover rural areas, where women are being discriminated against.

"We have organized several open sessions and programmes and rounds of discussion in some camps outside the city, and we have been receiving demands to conduct activities in other rural areas in the Kingdom," she added.

Article 35 which stipulates that owners of establishments who have more than 30 women at work should accommodate the institution with a suitable nursery room.

Ministries prepare to combat rat raid

AMMAN (J.T.) — The ministries of agriculture, municipal and rural affairs and health have joined forces with the Mafraq Municipality to rid the city and neighbouring regions of the rats that have been causing extensive damage to property.

After repeated public complaints to the local authorities, the public health committee met in Mafraq Thursday and set up a committee, representing the three ministries and the municipality, to carry out a survey of the affected regions and the volume of the problem in preparation for a campaign against the rodents.

At the same time, the local municipalities said they would join hands in working out a plan for combating the rats. Mafraq Municipality has requested a JD 50,000 grant from the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs to buy the necessary poisonous materials

Iraqi dinar takes a plunge in Amman

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The embattled Iraqi dinar, still a source of hopes of bumper gains for speculators despite setbacks last year, took another plunge this week in Jordan after signs of an early lifting of international sanctions against Iraq.

The Iraqi dinar was worth eight fils in the local markets on Thursday, down from 10 fils weeks ago, when long awaited long-term monitoring of its arms development programme as part of the ceasefire resolutions that ended the 1991 War over Kuwait.

Investors hoped that the Iraqi exception of the key provision in the ceasefire terms would lead to a partial lifting of the sanctions, but as it turned out, it could be another four to eight months before the U.N. Security Council would seriously consider any relaxation of the sweeping embargo.

In a regular two-month review of the sanctions, the Security Council made no move in December to relax the sweeping embargo, which has choked off Iraqi oil exports — Baghdad's mainstay income.

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Sigh of relief

THE MINISTER of Information, Dr. Jawad Nabi, put it appropriately yesterday, after the signing of the Jordanian-PLO economic agreement, when he said that the accord would be "a starting point for the two peoples in Jordan and Palestine. Indeed the seemingly tense atmosphere that characterised the otherwise warm relations between the leaderships of Jordan and Palestine was disturbing for people on both sides of the Jordan River.

A majority of Jordanians and Palestinians supported the start of the peace talks in Madrid in 1991. They saw in Jordan providing an umbrella for the Palestinian side a good omen and a strong indication at the depth of ties between the two peoples. Then, and thanks to the persistence of Palestinian negotiators and a skill of the Jordanian team led by Dr. Abdulla Majali, it was possible for the Palestinians to wrest from the Israelis recognition of their status as an independent team.

Then the Palestinians and the Israelis arrived at their declaration of principles in secret talks in Oslo. That took Jordanians and everybody else by surprise. Yet Jordan chose, after absorbing the shock, to declare its full support for the agreement and for the Palestinian negotiators. And one day after the historic accord was signed between PLO and Israel in Washington on Sept. 13, Jordan went ahead and signed its own agenda for the peace talks. It was otherwise ready long before but acting for progress on the Palestinian track. Unfortunately, the Palestinian brothers were submerged in their bargaining with the Israelis that they relegated their coordination with the Jordanians. Jordan, of course, would have protested had it not been to the fact that every aspect of negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis would, one way or the other, affect Jordan. Hence, His Majesty King Hussein's warning last week: Coordinate or let each of us go his own way.

Whether that warning was behind the sending of the negotiating team to Amman on Wednesday is besides the point. What has apparently inspired is a comprehensive agreement between the two sides on most of the issues facing their negotiations with Israel and a determination to hold more frequent coordination talks between them.

Now that the two sides have settled the dispute, people in Jordan and the occupied territories can focus their efforts on the means of strengthening peace prospects. Meanwhile, the two sides need to keep the momentum and work together for the good of their peoples.

FAIR PRESS COMMENTARIES

An Arabic daily Thursday echoed His Majesty King Hussein's words two days ago that there will be no separate Jordan-Israeli peace and that the peace being sought by the two sides should be comprehensive and just and acceptable for future generations. The King's words included in a speech to the Public Security and Civil Defence requires more and more reading because, in it, the King has clarified the true Jordanian position and firm stand vis-a-vis the peace process and the negotiations, said the daily. Furthermore, the King made it clear that there can be no separation between Jordan and Palestine because this will affect the people on both sides of the River Jordan and since the Palestinians have established their free state in their own soil, added the paper. It said that though Jordan is asked to provide support to the PLO, the Kingdom wants more, namely if the PLO leadership is truly representing the entire people and if the PLO maintains its credibility in line with the Kingdom, the King is keen to maintain a solid and firm coordination between the Jordanians and the Palestinians, and does not want to see any more procrastination and delays in the King's decisions in this respect, the paper said. On the whole, the King's speech has placed matters in a new perspective, emphasising that the Kingdom is determined never to compromise the national soil.

THE Palestinians and the Jordanians are watching to see how to get good results from the bilateral talks that started between them in Amman Wednesday as the two cling to their unity and their common goals, said Al Jadid daily. The meetings in Amman constitute one more in a chain of efforts to attain coordination at all levels in cooperation that would boost the nation's efforts in regaining Arab rights, the paper noted. There is no doubt that the two sides are holding talks in good faith and in a spirit as they both face the looming challenges and as the developments in the region and the events are making fast, making them pressed for time to achieve good and fair future, continued the daily. It should be seen, the paper, that there can be no real coordination among the countries involved in the peace process unless Jordanians and Palestinians reach genuine coordination first.

Jordanian Perspective

Small steps on a long way ahead

By Dr. Musa Keilani

THE so-called ultimatum (that's how the Western media described it) that His Majesty King Hussein served last week on Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat to come clean with Jordan and revive coordination or go separate ways is seen by many in the Arab World and elsewhere as pressure on Mr. Arafat and a Jordanian tactic. Unfortunately those who see the King's pointed comments from that perspective are short-sighted simply because they fail to grasp that the Jordanian stand did not come out of a vacuum.

For them, the King's repeated references to Jordan's commitment to respecting the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and the assistance that Jordan extended to enable the Palestinians to participate in the 26-month-old Arab-Israeli peace process meant a complaint that Jordan was being sidelined in the Israel-PLO negotiations on implementing the groundbreaking autonomy agreement signed on Sept. 13.

It is naive for anyone to think that Jordan could be sidelined or turned into a player who reacts to events rather than initiating them. Jordan did not live through the tragedies of the Arab World, particularly those which befall the Palestinian people, to be told, indirectly or directly, to take a back seat until such time other players are ready to deal.

Quite simply, Jordan cannot afford to do and will not do so regardless of the limitations imposed on it. We have our national concerns as an independent sovereign state and we will not let those concerns be under the mercy of anyone. What we would like to have is a clear position based on a genuine desire for Arab coordination which will protect Arab interests in the context of the conflict with Israel without compromising or jeopardising Jordan's national interests, which do not threaten anyone else's or come at the expense of another.

The King's clear call on the PLO to drop all references to a future Jordanian-Palestinian confederation until such time as the Palestinians could exercise their legitimate territorial and political rights stemmed from a constant reminder of the fact that many independence-seeking Palestinians were slowly losing confidence in the peace process because they see a confederation dominated by Jordan as the end result.

Preoccupation with the problems of the past, mainly the fallout of the Palestinian problem, has been plaguing Jordan's political life for a long time. And it is unthinkable now we continue to pay the price for future shapes and eventualities based on assumptions that harm the entire process of bringing about security and stability that we all long for.

For us in Jordan, having had to share a major part of the suffering along with the Palestinians, the strong comments the King made last week are very clear: Unless the PLO came forth with clearly defined political and economic options and worked out an unambiguous and transparent agreement on political and economic coordination with Jordan, the people

on the both sides of the River Jordan stood to suffer while Israel reaped the benefits of the disarray in our ranks.

If someone would like to interpret it as putting pressure on Mr. Arafat at a time when he is grappling with the task of extracting concessions from Israel in the self-rule negotiations, then let it be so.

It should be understood that the PLO has acquired not only the status of the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people but also the responsibilities that go with it. One cannot have a half-measure of a representative status without having to shoulder the obligations and responsibilities that go with it. Having to deal with the Jordanian position, stated publicly after having put up with procrastination and reticence, is part of that responsibility.

The sympathy that we may feel for Mr. Arafat in his predicament with the Israelis does not necessarily mean that we wait patiently until such time he is fully convinced that he could not get anything more out of Israel during the interim period.

A simple example in this context is the PLO's quest for an independent Palestinian monetary authority in the occupied territories. For all practical purposes, it could have secured Israeli approval for such an authority had it not been the attached demand that the authority be also empowered to issue a Palestinian currency. In the end, Israel ruled out both.

In the same vein, many of the so-called experts on the Middle East conflict tend to describe the reopening of Jordanian commercial banks in the occupied territories as the main objective of the Jordanians strategy. Again, the question that they do not care to answer is: Can it be as simple as that? Can just the reopening of the banks mean a total and satisfactory answer to the concerns that Jordan has, including the human dimension of the conflict?

Whether anyone likes it or not, Jordan has genuine concerns over the course of the political and economic developments taking place in the context of the Israel-PLO negotiations on implementing self-rule. The Kingdom simply cannot wait round the corner after the PLO and Israel thrash out an agreement and then engage the PLO in accords that would inevitably have to be based on whatever Israel is willing to grant the Palestinians in the first place during the interim period.

Inasmuch as we in Jordan anxious to ensure that the Palestinians regain their territorial and political rights and that the autonomy accord succeeds in reaching the half-way point before "final status" negotiations start, the fact remains that it was the PLO which worked out the Oslo accord despite all its ambiguities and contradictions and, as such, it cannot blame anyone else or let anyone else pay the price for its shortcomings.

At the same time, it does mean either that Jordan would like to sit back and await the results of the scenarios being played out between Israel and the PLO. The most disturbing element

in the equation is that the PLO has not been exercising its option of strengthening its own hand by coordinating closer with the Arabs, particularly Jordan itself.

But then coordination for coordination sake is not what Jordan is looking for. There are real issues at stake here and it is high time the PLO leadership took a closer look at recent Jordanian moves and undertakings in the regional and international scene to realise that its best bet lies in coming forth with clarity and transparency in its dealing with the Kingdom.

However, the lingering suspicion (or at least that is how some describe it) that Jordan continues to harbour territorial and political ambitions in the West Bank despite its severance of administrative and legal ties in 1988 seems to hold back the PLO leadership. How much of it is actual concern and how much of it is a smokescreen to hide behind is left to anyone's guess.

However, it is against this backdrop that King Hussein repeatedly states that Jordan does not have any such designs and clearly affirmed that the Kingdom's position on Jerusalem stems from religious considerations rather than a quest to stake a territorial claim to the Holy City. The approach is more significant and urgent when seen against the fact that the Israel-PLO agreement puts off the question of Jerusalem until the "final status" negotiations. What guarantees does anyone have against Israeli consolidation of its grip on the Holy City and fait accomplis during the interim period?

If the PLO has the answer to that, among other major questions, then it should make it clear to Jordan with a view to assessing the probabilities and chances of addressing the concerns that not only Jordan but also the rest of the Muslim World have on the future of the Holy City. That is where genuine coordination begins.

Jordan is seeking a new era in relations with the Palestinians, as represented by the PLO, in a very clear framework which leaves no room for any ambiguity or suspicions. And if the PLO knows what it is doing, then it should realise and appreciate the frank and sincere positions of Jordan and come forward and join hands in the same spirit and objective to serving the future of the people from both sides of the river.

Signing agreements and loud proclamations of clarity and vision are simply not enough; they should be accompanied by sincerity and the vision of joint moves that protect the interests of both and preempt Israeli exploitation of Arab differences.

Judging from the public and private comments from both sides after the latest round of talks in Amman following the so-called ultimatum, the first steps were taken towards the better relationship. But then these first steps have to be followed through with a genuine understanding of the pitfalls that await both if these steps were taken as an end in themselves rather than the beginning of a process which should lead to positive results for both.

The Week in Print

Jordanian-Palestinian coordination is only solution to reaching peace

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

The local Arabic papers last week gave prominence to the ongoing Jordanian-Palestinian talks on coordination of efforts regarding the peace process and their own future relationship. The press also discussed the Middle East peace, Arab affairs and a host of domestic issues.

Under the title: "Let this be the last of the crises between the two sides", a columnist in Al Dostour said that all the eyes are turned to Amman now to watch for good results coming out of the continuing Jordanian-Palestinian meetings.

Everyone concerned about the Palestinian-Jordanian relationship is waiting to see the results of talks which aim at coordinating the two sides' positions in the coming round of peace talks and also to pave the ground for sound and fruitful relationships in the coming stage, said Tamer Al Udwani.

Success of these talks, said the writer, means failure of Israel's attempts to split the united people and failure to achieve its own policy of dealing separately with Arab states in order to impose its hegemony on them.

Commenting on the ongoing talks, Sultan Al Hattab from Al Ra'i expressed his view that Jordanian-Palestinian coordination is a must if the peace process is to achieve its desired end. Differences serve no Arab party and only through a united stand can the Arabs face the challenge of peace, said the writer.

He said that the Jordanian and Palestinian brothers as they are the closest to the Palestinian problem and most affected by the results of the coming peace, he said.

We had thought that 1993 was the year of peace for the Middle East region, but we have entered the new year with no signs of it being on its way, said Mohammad Kawash in Al Dostour.

Tareq Masa'weh, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that

Oslo deal was an optimistic sign for a good beginning of Israeli withdrawals from occupied Arab land, starting early in 1994, but all these hopes have not been fulfilled to date, added the writer.

Of course, he said, nothing was achieved since the Israelis are holding on to their intransigent positions and it seems that after all the efforts are not one, including Washington, is able to exercise pressure on Israel to honour its pledges, said the writer. Only a miracle, he added, can break the deadlock now.

Tareq Masa'weh commented on a visit by Qatar's foreign minister to Jordan last week by quoting him as saying that the sanctions on Iraq should end and that Arab differences should vanish.

The columnist, who writes in Al Ra'i said that calls for pan-Arab solidarity have been coming not only from Qatar but also from Oman and other states in the region, reflecting the feelings of the Arab masses.

The two Gulf states are spearheading efforts in the Gulf region to end the plight of the Iraqi people, a step which is ought to be taken by the other Arab countries, he said.

Indeed, it is more reasonable and honourable for the Arabs to end the sanctions on Iraq before the other world countries can take the steps in this direction, added the writer.

It was Prince Hassan who opened the way for the Qatari minister's visit to Jordan to break the ice in relations with the Gulf states, said Mohammad Kawash in Al Dostour.

The Qatari minister's visit gave a strong indication of Qatar's positive response to Jordan's call for solidarity and brotherly relations, said the writer.

He said that Arab states' differences, caused by the Gulf crisis, should be transcended in the interest of the Arab Nation.

Salah Al Ollab, a columnist in Al Dostour, tackled the problem arising from the street stalls and street vendors on the pavements of Zarqa, the second largest Jordanian city.

The writer said that the local authorities in Zarqa are



M. KAHL

now chasing away the street vendors because their stalls are allegedly obstructing traffic and serving as a black market.

But these vendors have been seeing this kind of trade for years and this is the only means of earning a decent living for their families, he said.

The solution to this problem lies in creating an open air market for the vendors in the Zarqa region, which the authorities have promised to do, the writer said. He expressed hope that the problem would end soon.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily wondered when the Amman-Zarqa road and the Amman-Dead Sea road would be completed, after years since the start of this project. Nazih Qousi said the public has been promised over and over again that the roads would be completed soon, but the deadline was overlooked every time.

These two roads are essential for promoting tourism in Jordan and we demand that they be finished as soon as possible, said the writer. He said that the Ministry of Public Works is responsible to see to it that the work is completed according to the term of the contract and in the public interest.

A columnist in Al Dostour raised the question of dual decisions by successive governments: referring in particular to a specific project in Aqaba. Ahmad Shaker said that under the previous government the decision was taken to set up tourist facilities along the southern coast of Aqaba and a local firm had been awarded a contract and started work, only to be stopped by the present government last month.

The writer questioned the wisdom behind the order to halt the project in which the local company has invested a fortune and which, when completed, would earn the Kingdom a fortune from the tourist business.

LETTERS

Empty symbols

To the Editor:

The banana republic is an old phenomenon in the relationship between developed and underdeveloped countries. This phenomenon is actually the backbone of neo-colonialism, whereby the economic interests of foreign corporations are preserved and promoted in an ex-colony by a strong paramilitary force. These banana republics possess only the trappings and symbols of independence; a flag, a president, a big police force.

Latin America was at one point a bunch of banana republics whose resources, which were primarily agricultural, were usurped by corporations like the United Fruit Company, which essentially became the decision makers in Latin America after formal colonialism ended at the turn of the century. This was no blessing for the people of Latin America nor for the continent itself. Neo-colonialism and banana republics are in fact the direct cause of poverty, incurable environmental catastrophes, the non-existence of basic human rights, and severe underdevelopment of the continent.

Again, it is important to emphasise that banana republics have been around for almost one hundred years. It is clear that the transition from colonised entity to banana republic is not beneficial for the indigenous population.

Thus it is alarming that the Palestinian people could be subjected to a legal status even less than that of a banana republic; a banana self-autonomous region. This banana self-autonomous region actually has no defined borders, it is physically disjointed, it has few natural resources, the most significant being small banana and citrus groves owned mostly by wealthy Jerusalame families, and it contains the most densely populated and one of the most polluted areas on earth, which, according to Edward Said, makes Soweto look like a resort town.

Have the Palestinians become so obsessed by symbols that they have forgotten what these symbols ought to represent? What value do these symbols have to a banana self-autonomous region? Will these symbols bring about the development of the physically disjointed areas? Will they exercise their basic human rights and enjoy basic civil liberties?

It is not symbols that last, but what these symbols stand for. Do they not fail to have symbols which stand for nothing?

Zaid Zalatimo,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Expression and creativity An old idea is gathering new scientific support

By Natalie Angier

NEW YORK — As long as there have been poets to pierce the darkness with their diamond songs, and painters to capture rays of sun shattering on cool cathedral stone, and artists of all persuasions to consort with the gods and articulate the union, there have been social critics to notice that an awful lot of these creative people are mentally unsound. "Why is it," Aristotle asked in the fourth century B.C., "that all men who are outstanding in philosophy, poetry or the arts are melancholic?"

Three hundreds years ago, the English poet John Dryden wrote: "Great wits are sure to madness near allied / And thin partitions do their bounds divide," a sweet couplet that has since degenerated into the sorry cliché. "There is a thin line between genius and madness."

Yet as with any cliché worth the iteration, this one has a sizable grain of truth in it. After many decades of quarreling over how to define slippery and often subjective terms like "madness" and "creativity," psychiatrists, neurologists and evolutionary geneticists at last have accrued powerful evidence that the link between certain mental disorders and artistic achievement is real. Study after study has shown that people in the arts suffer disproportionately high rates of mood disorders, particularly manic depression and major depression.

Those with manic depression, or bipolar disorder, oscillate between summit and abyss — between a sense of grandeur and recklessness, a boundless, knockabout energy that feasts on itself and disdains the need for sleep; and a profound depression in which anguish, lethargy and self-hatred dominate. Many of the most eminent creators seem to have

had full-blown manic depression, others have had milder forms of the disorder and still others have suffered repeated episodes of major depression, the same bleakness seen in the downswing of manic depression but without its euphoric counterpart.

As Dr. Kay Redfield Jamison points out in her recent book, *Touched with Fire: Manic Depressive Illness and the Artistic Temperament*, the list of artists in whom manic depression or severe depression has been diagnosed with confidence is a pantheon, of

Epilepsy's impact on artistry

APART FROM mood disorders, other disturbances of the brain have been associated with artistic creation, in particular temporal lobe epilepsy. In this disease, the temporal lobes on the sides of the brain, where memory and feelings reside, are intermittently seized by chaotic storms of electrical hyperactivity.

Although the seizures may be undetectable to observers, they can prompt symptoms like hallucinations, powerful religious sensations, fury, fear, joy and — a blessing for those in the arts — an unquenchable desire to write or draw, a desire that persists even after the seizure is over.

Seizures are different physiologic events from episodes of mania or depression, but they can exert on an artist a similar sense of grandeur and mastery.

Thom Jones, whose recent collection of short stories, "The Fugilist at Rest" (1993), is a finalist for the National Book Award, said his temporal lobe epilepsy, which he traces to a brain injury suffered while boxing, profoundly defines his personality and his work.

"Before my injury, I wasn't inclined to be a reader, or obsessed with God and the meaning of life," he said. "Ever since this happened to me, I've been a more introspective guy, constantly reading philosophy, studying world religions and then having a fever, literally a fever, to write."

"It's a lust, an obsession, to put it down, and in the act of writing I'm not Thom Jones. And it's such a relief to not be Thom Jones."

Some famous, and famously mad, creators may have suffered from both temporal lobe epilepsy and manic depression, including Edgar Allan Poe and Vincent van Gogh. Van Gogh's blend of mental agony and creative passion was so profound that despair finally drove him at the age of 37 to shoot himself in the chest, and died of his wound two days later.

realise how solid and consistent the work really is." Psychiatrists have found that among distinguished artists, the rates of manic depression and major depression are 10 to 30 times as prevalent as in the population at large.

Importantly, the periods of either mania or depression are interrupted by long stretches of normality in which the artist appears in command of their work.

"People have a problem with the idea that someone can be both very healthy and very ill," Dr. Jamison said. "But those with manic depression can be very scared and extremely confident at the same time. And it takes that hyperconfidence when you're breaking down borders in art and doing things that haven't been done before."

Some scientists suggest that because manic-depressive patients are ever riding the biochemical express between emotional extremes, their brains end up more persistently plastic than do the brains of less mercurial sorts. That heightened interconnectedness between one neural neighbourhood and the next, as well as an ongoing receptivity to new information, may allow a person with a mood disorder to synthesise seemingly incongruous thoughts and to reimagine the ordinary into the extraordinary — the essence of artistic creation.

Although creativity is obviously an essential element in many professions, the link between creativity and mental instability is more pronounced in the arts than in other fields. For example, Dr. Arnold M. Ludwig, a professor of psychiatry at the University of Kentucky Medical Centre in Lexington and author of a forthcoming book, *The Price of Greatness* looked at the incidence of psychiatric illness among 1,004 eminent men and women.

Considering individuals in eight creative-arts professions and 10 other professions, of the stature of Aldous Huxley, Alexander Graham Bell, Albert Einstein and Henri Matisse, Dr. Ludwig discovered that psychiatric disturbances were far more common among the artists than among the others. For example, the rate of alcoholism was 60 per cent among actors and 41 per cent among novelists, but only 3 per cent among those in the physical sciences and 10 per cent among military officers.

In the case of manic depression, Dr. Jamison and others also propose that the excessive energy of a manic episode may give rise to a volcano of ideas that the mind can then shape into something meaningful during the less frenetic, more sceptical moments of a depression or a bout of normality.

Some researchers are looking at the problem from an

evolutionary angle, arguing that manic depression is not a disease but a trait, a fairly common genetic variation on a temperamental theme that in prehistoric times conferred strong advantages to those who inherited it. From family and twin studies, researchers have concluded that a predisposition to manic depression is strongly inherited (although recent attempts to isolate a gene have proved fruitless). Given the

prevalence of manic depression in the population, the gene or genes responsible for the disorder could not possibly be around by chance. Instead, geneticists argue, the trait has been retained by evolution for a reason.

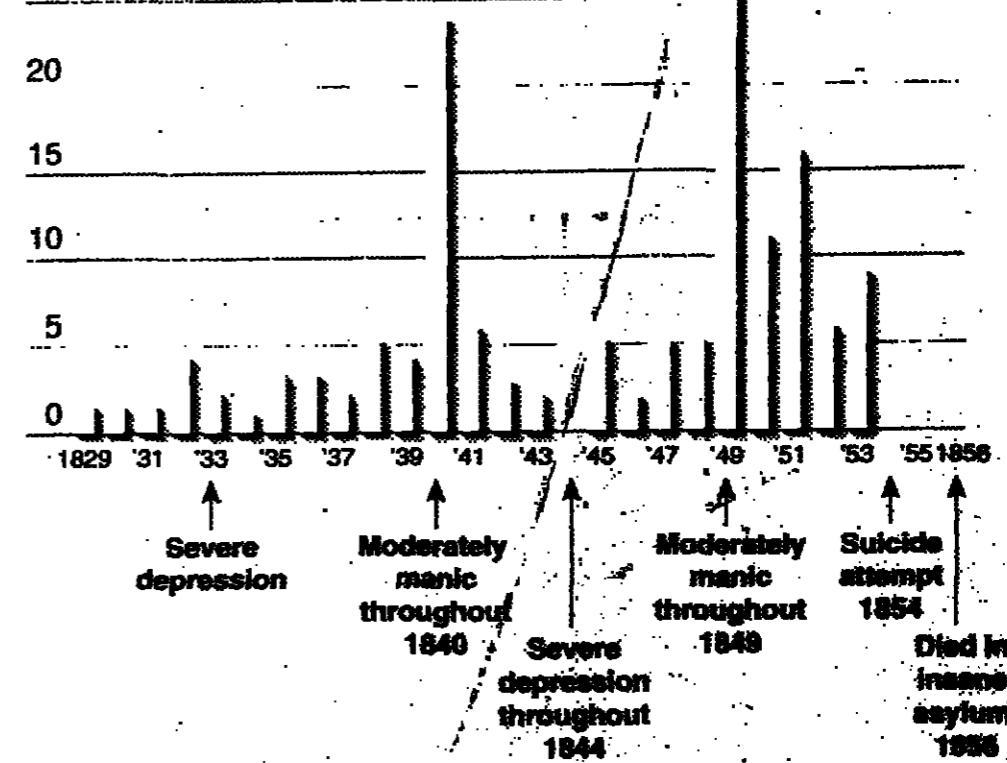
"If this were simply an erroneous, random mutation, you'd expect to see maybe 1 in 3,000 people with the disorder," said Dr. Daniel Willson, who divides his time be-

tween practising clinical psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and studying anthropology at Cambridge University in England. "Instead, the incidence is at least 1 in 100 or even higher, whether you're looking at people in New York City or the Kalahari Desert. So if you're talking about a gene system that is 30, even 100 times more common than it ought to be —" New York Times.

Mapping Madness and Genius

The quantity, if not the quality, of the composer Robert Schumann's output varied strikingly with episodes of depression or mania and the relatively benign periods between. He lived from 1810 to 1856, when he died of self-starvation.

25 compositions



Jordan, PLO sign economic accord

(Continued from page 1)

was the number one priority in the economic pact signed on Friday. A joint technical committee will be established to supervise the reopening of Jordanian bank branches in the occupied territories, and to coordinate monetary and financial policies in Palestine and to agree on policies of investment, Dr. Anani said.

He said that around 300 million dinars, almost one fourth of dinars issued by the Central Bank, were in circulation in the occupied territories and it was the duty of the joint technical committee to supervise the stability of currency in the territories.

However, the previous draft stipulated that the CBJ was the party authorised, in a joint manner between the two sides, to reorganise the reopening of Jordanian bank branches which were closed in 1967 by the occupying authorities.

Mr. Nashashibi said a Palestinian central bank was not established yet, and the setting up of one was being considered and studied by the PLO; therefore there would be no role, during the interim period, for such a central bank in the monetary and financial affairs in the occupied territories.

He said the Jordanian dinar would be the tender used in the Palestinian territories. However, the agreement allowed for the use of other Arab international currencies according to the economic benefit and interests of the Palestinian economy and in complete coordination with the CBJ.

Dr. Anani said bank branches would open in the West Bank very soon, as soon as technical matters were finalised.

In terms of priority, we think that banking and reopening of bank branches in the West Bank is the thing we can immediately embark upon," Dr. Anani said. In the banking sector, he said, both sides agreed to study and cooperate in the field of specialised credit institutions.

Mr. Nashashibi said both sides also agreed that Jordan

and the "liberated Palestinian territories" would act as one market and trade between them would be considered international trade.

The accord has set joint objectives in developing free trade and free movement of persons, goods, and capital," the PLO official said.

The second priority, according to Dr. Anani, is trade. He said the volume of trade between Palestine and Jordan was left open, contrary to the previous draft which specified that the volume of trade between the two sides would be no less than \$300 million in the first year, to be increased during the next two years.

"Concerning the trade issue, which will be pressing upon us very soon, unfortunately we cannot do things our own way. We have to remember there is still an occupier and we have to unify our positions in order to confront the Israeli designs to divert trade between us in favour of the Israeli economy. This is the gist of what we have agreed upon," Dr. Anani said.

Dr. Anani said both sides have agreed to deal with priorities and to activate the joint committees which should be meeting very soon, probably next week. He said the economic pact would be submitted to the Cabinet for approval today.

Dr. Anani said the only guarantees for implementing the pact "is the fact that we have no other alternative."

He said the "seriousness with which we dealt with this issue, the haggling over every specific term that was used in it reflected our belief in serious intentions on both sides to put it into implementation was a guarantee."

He added that the question of guarantees whether the agreement would be honoured was not a "valid question. There are no such things as guarantees because we emanated from our deep conviction that our interests are interrelated and must be coordinated and streamlined and we did not adopt anything that was not in line with the interests of both Palestinian and Jordanian people."

Mr. Nashashibi said: "One important guarantee was our political will, and our decisions are our genuine interest. These determine the real guarantees. We signed it by our free will."

Dr. Anani said the agreement would prevent any future misunderstandings between Jordan and the Palestinians. He noted that after reported Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho and the PLO assumed power in these territories, Jordan would be ready to cooperate in line with specified and agreed steps

took up arms last year against the government of President Violeta Chamorro. An army offensive and government amnesty largely neutralised the threat, but armed bands still smouldered throughout the region.

From the poor state of Chiapas on the Mexico-Guatemala border where Indians launched their new year's day insurrection, to the jungle regions of southeastern Panama controlled by Colombian guerrillas, armed revolutionary bands are a persistent annoyance if not a serious threat to Central America's elected rulers.

The FMLN has vehemently denied the accusations, but it admitted the existence of secret arms caches last year after several were found in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras.

Even Panama — which remained relatively peaceful while

wars came and went elsewhere in the region — has its problems.

Leftist Colombian rebels reportedly control large areas of Panama's Darien jungle for use in drug trafficking and as a launchpad for guerrilla activity in Colombia.

What the Chiapas revolt — and last year's events in Guatemala and Nicaragua — show is that where governments fail to resolve social problems, people are still prepared to be organised terrorist attacks from a hideout in the western highlands near Costa Rica.

Mr. Gondasegui said problems of poverty, unemployment and landlessness were the driving force behind most of the intermittent guerrilla activity in the region.

"While many are forging ahead with industrial development and free trade agreements, others are still struggling to survive and sometimes see revolutionary methods as the only ones left to them," he added.

In Guatemala, up to 800 leftist rebels from the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) are still fighting a 33-year-old war which has claimed at least 100,000 lives.

The heavy fighting of the 1980s, however, has turned to sporadic terrorist attacks on the URNG in rural areas.

In Nicaragua, as many as 2,000 former combatants from both sides of the 1980s civil war

said. The rebel activity of previous decades was aided in part by cold war rivals as Central America became a flashpoint for the struggle between the United States and its adversaries. The leftists received support from sympathetic countries, but, with the collapse of communism, that support is all but gone.

Indian activist Atencio Lopez warned that, instead of ideology, an increasing militancy among the region's indigenous people may fuel guerrilla activity in the future.

"Indigenous people are no longer prepared to tolerate the disgraceful disregard of their problems," said Mr. Lopez, a

Panamanian Kuna who often represents Latin American Indians at international forums. "What you are seeing today in Chiapas could well happen tomorrow in Costa Rica or Panama if they continue to ignore us."

Indians are believed to make up the bulk of the self-styled Zapatista National Liberation Army whose four-day-old uprising in Chiapas has so far claimed at least 93 lives.

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الجبل في الـ 15

6 Economy

Gulf Arabs start '94 with tough road ahead

DUBAI (R) — Gulf Arab economies start 1994 with a difficult road ahead and governments struggling with low oil prices and budget deficits.

Economists say the 1993 collapse of oil prices to five-year lows of just above \$13 per barrel sent shock waves through the region and put pressure on governments to spend less.

Qatar are likely to follow. But diplomats say the Gulf economies remain strong.

"It is important to keep things in perspective. We are talking about extremely large figures in the Saudi budget and it is an extremely large market, so it is wrong to assume the good days are over," one diplomat said.

"They have been in a situation of low oil prices before and they have come through it," he added.

But vast oil reserves will help cushion the pain.

Cuts in spending will also send a positive message to world markets that the governments are serious about dealing with their budget deficits, diplomats say.

Saudi Arabia issued a nearly balanced 1994 budget cutting spending by 20 per cent to 160

billion riyals (\$42.67 billion) from last year's budgeted 196.95 billion (\$52.52 billion).

King Fahd ordered government departments not to forge any deals which would add costs to future budgets in the kingdom, which pumps about eight million barrels of oil a day.

Experts put Saudi's monthly oil revenue in December at around \$3 billion, down from \$3.5 billion in November. They estimate it has up to \$10 billion non-oil revenue a year.

In Kuwait, where officials have said the 1994 budget would have spending cuts, economists estimate that if the oil prices keep falling the emirate could lose up to \$200 million a month.

In the UAE, expected to issue its 1994 budget later this month, economists say that the

non-oil sector stands at about 60 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) and that economic growth — which increased 20 per cent in 1991-92 and five per cent in 1992-93 — will continue at a lower rate.

The impacts of spending cuts on Gulf economies depended largely on which sectors are cut. Diplomats say it is difficult to guess in the case of Saudi Arabia, whose budget did not give any details.

"The problem now is how to distribute the cut and which sectors it is going to affect," Sheikh Saoudoun said.

"If it touches defence then it won't have any economic effects, but if it touches the infrastructure then it will have political and social repercussions which would mean a decline in the income and level of services," he added.

Diplomats say the kingdom still has to finance large infrastructure projects for its 17 million people. Per capita GDP is

put at between \$8,000 and \$10,000.

"There were signs towards the end of last year that they were cutting back on agricultural subsidies... but for example construction is still going on."

Economists and diplomats say it is now essential for Gulf governments to give the private sector a bigger role, a policy most have been following for the past few years.

The cut in spending is unlikely to affect directly the Gulf people, who in general enjoy a high standard of living.

"As long as governments maintain the welfare system, then the man in the street is happy," one diplomat said.

There are no signs that Gulf governments plan to cut spending on subsidies, utilities and services to their citizens.

French bankruptcies rise 11.2 per cent

PARIS (AFP) — The number of French companies which went bankrupt in 1993 rose by 11.2 per cent from the figure in 1992 to 1,100, the president of the French credit insurance company, Paul Henri Denieul, has said.

This was the lowest rate of increase since 1989 and most growth occurred in the first half of the year when the figure rose by 22.13 per cent from the figure for the same period in 1992.

Mr. Denieul said that the French economy had "reached a lowest point" of the economic cycle during the second half of 1993 and that businesses could now "count on recovery." The big unknown factor was "the problem of consumption."

In the second half of last year the number of companies rose by only 0.7 per cent.

In 1992, the number of companies which failed had been 1.1 per cent higher than in 1991.

Philippines '93 foreign debt tops \$34 billion

MANILA (AFP) — The Philippines had a balance of payments deficit of \$92 million and foreign debt topped \$34 billion in 1993, but economic growth prospects are bright through 1995, officials have said.

Central bank governor Gabriel Singson said in an annual report to President Fidel Ramos that the deficit, which followed a surplus of \$353 million in 1992, was largely caused by a trade gap of \$6 billion.

Total external debt reached \$34.4 billion in August, the latest available tally, from \$30.9 billion at the end of 1992.

Mr. Singson said the situation was "under firm control" and indicators were "within acceptable international norms." Debt to gross national product (GNP) ratio was 64.3 per cent and debt service was 18.8 per cent of export receipts.

Foreign investment inflows exceeded \$2 billion but the net impact was only \$437 million due to an outward surge after foreign exchange transactions were liberalised by President

Ramos. Mr. Singson said he should not be considered indicating capital flight in a normal immediate outcome of liberalisation.

Inflation averaged about 10 per cent last year but inflation rates surged beyond 16 per cent in late 1993, Mr. Singson said, urging Mr. Ramos to adopt a "stronger fiscal policy to hold down interest."

Excessive fiscal deficits, poor revenue collections expected to figure prominently in negotiations next week, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission.

If the talks are successful Manila, which returned to international capital markets last year with Eurobond issues will seek a rescheduling of \$1 billion in official debt.

Officials, businessmen and foreign investors are bullish about the Philippines' short-term prospects following the 1992 recession and last year's estimated 2.5 per cent GNP growth, barely above the population increase.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY JANUARY 8, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A day when you can apply the Golden Rule or not due to considerable friction and a marked difference of opinion. Self-control and kindness can alleviate any trouble.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Handle matters of taxes, salaries, stocks and bonds, etc., nicely during day hours. Let your words with loved ones dispel gossip.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) It is vital to your best interests that you sit down with associates and plan future activities more intelligently, and far into the future.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) If you handle usual Saturday duties more efficiently, you will impress higher-ups more favourably and they will bestow favour towards your success.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Avoid those friends who want to impose their will on you today by maintaining your important business attend to.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be careful you do not go off on some tangent today that will take away from the prestige you now enjoy and bring trouble to you today.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) There are those who look to you for assistance today, so be sure you do not run off to some place where you can spend money foolishly instead.

future. Get information from your paper and other reliable sources.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Make use of today's free time to know exactly what your financial status is. Then get together with some business experts to informally and discuss better ways and means of operating in the future.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Life seems to be complicated at this time that you want to drop everything and migrate, like the birds, but work is the only panacea.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get the days entertainment planned so that they are not too expensive and also make it point to help those who are not working.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) If you are not the soul of diplomacy today, there can be some pretty serious arguments with family ties or friends. Be a peacemaker instead.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Study more modern systems which will help you to operate more efficiently in the

THE Daily Crossword



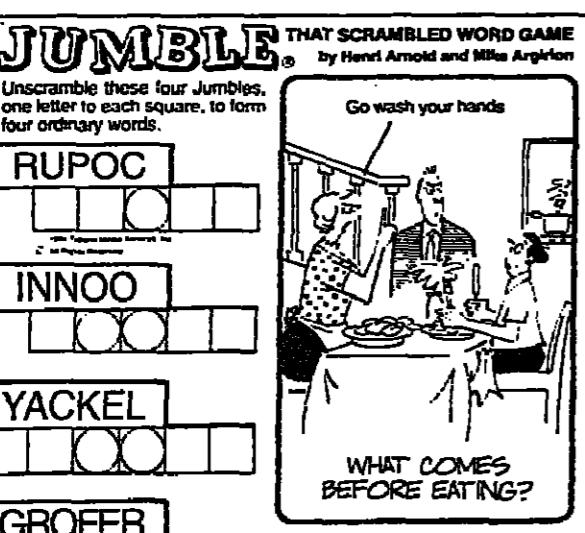
THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris

HARRIS



"My women's magazine says we should glue magnets to our lips to help us kiss longer!"



Print answer here:
(Answers Monday)
Yesterday's Jumbles: BERET KAPOK BEWARE MOSAIC
Answer: What the patrons of the restaurant became — "WAITERS"

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET						
HOUSING BANK CENTER - AMMAN - SHATEEJI TELEPHONE 664170 / 664170						
GENERALISED BANKS TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (01/01/1994 - 02/01/1994)						
WEEKLY REPORT						
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE JD	OPENING CLOSING PRICE JD	PRICE JD	CHANGES JD	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
JORDAN BANK	210,700	186.00	186.00	186.00	-1.00	-0.5%
JORDAN FARMERS BANK	231,914	4.200	4.200	4.200	-0.05	-1.2%
JORDAN BANK	214,649	34.350	34.350	34.350	-0.750	-2.2%
JORDAN BANK INVESTMENT BANK	56,914	4.210	4.250	4.250	0.040	1.0%
JORDAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	267,682	4.200	4.200	4.200	-0.050	-1.2%
JORDAN HOLDING BANK	102,188	5.150	5.150	5.150	-0.050	-1.0%
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL BANK	362,618	3.110	3.180	3.230	0.120	4.0%
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	22,150	4.250	4.250	4.250	-0.050	-1.2%
JORDAN JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	2,579	4.220	4.220	4.220	-0.050	-1.2%
JORDAN LEADERSHIP BANK FOR TRADE & INVESTMENT	21,719	4.220	5.140	5.000	-0.060	-1.4%
JORDAN BANK	21,719	4.220	5.140	5.000	-0.060	-1.4%
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	7,222	7.250	7.250	7.250	-0.050	-1.2%
JORDAN BANK FOR HOUSING	19,318	4.150	4.770	4.900	-0.120	-2.5%
JORDAN BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	2,822,212	4.200	4.200	4.200	-0.050	-1.2%
JORDAN BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	6,764	4.200	4.600	4.600	-0.050	-1.2%
JORDAN FINANCIAL BANK	762,184	2.240	2.420	2.550	-0.110	-4.9%
JORDAN FINANCIAL BANK	13,220	3.780	3.850	3.850	-0.070	-1.9%
JORDAN LAND EXIMBANK	3,155	3.200	3.200	3.200	-0.050	-1.5%
JORDAN LIFE & ACCIDENT INSURANCE	27,000	3.020	3.000	3.000	-0.020	-0.7%
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK FOR AGRICULTURE & INDUSTRY	1,168,548	3.450	3.450	3.450	-0.050	-1.4%
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK FOR AGRICULTURE & INDUSTRY	2,180,000	3.500	3.500	3.500	-0.050	-1.4%
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK FOR AGRICULTURE & INDUSTRY	4,254	1.200	1.200	1.200	-0.050	-1.2%
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK FOR AGRICULTURE & INDUSTRY	22,113	4.000	4.000	4.000	-0.050	-1.2%
JORDAN NATIONAL BANKING LINES	30,549	2.000	2.000	2.000	-0.050	-2.5%
JORDAN TELECOM & NEW COMPLEX	51,724	0.710	0.750	0.750	-0.040	-5.3%
JORDAN TRAVEL INSURANCE	27,255	3.500	3.500	3.500	-0.050	-1.4%
JORDAN TRAVEL INSURANCE	7,823	3.000	3.000	3.000	-0.050	-1.7%
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	4,100	1.050	1.050	1.110	-0.060	-5.7%
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER / AL-KHALIDIAH	1,100	1.000	1.000	1.000	-0.050	-5.0%
JORDAN HOTEL & CONGRESS HOTELS	504,574	3.100	3.100	3.100	-0.050	-1.6%
JORDAN PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	1,168,548	3.450	3.450	3.450	-0.050	-1.4%
JORDAN CHROMIC INDUSTRIES	2,180,000	3.500	3.500	3.500	-0.050	-1.4%
JORDAN PETRO MANUFACTURING	4,254	1.200	1.200	1.200	-0.050	-1.2%
THE PUBLIC HOLDING	285	2.800	2.800	2.800	-0.050	-1.8%
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	50,254	10.750	10.750	10.750	-0.050	-1.5%
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	10,254	10.750	10.750	10.750	-0.050	-1.5%
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,225	2.400	2.400	2.400	-0.050	-2.1%
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,934	0.370	0.360	0.360	-0.010	-2.7%
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	849,374	10.350	10.450	10.500	-0.150	-1.4%
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	1,120,220	10.100	10.100	10.100	-0.150	-1.4%
JORDAN PAPER MANUFACTURING & TRADING	34,895	1.520	1.520	1.520	-0.050	-3.3%
JORDAN MEDICAL EQUIPMENT	10,218	0.300	0.310	0.310	-0.010	-3.3%
JORDAN PLASTIC INDUSTRIES	21,717	0.300	0.300	0.300	-0.050	-1.7%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,733	3.310	3.310	3.310	-0.050	-1.5%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	855	0.800	0.700	0.700	-0.100	-12.5%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	31,200	2.100	2.100	2.100	-0.050	-2.3%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	42,370	1.200	1.200	1.200	-0.050	-4.2%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	32,144	1.050	1.050	1.050	-0.050	-4.7%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	46,12	1.050	1.120	1.120	-0.070	-6.7%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,310	0.150	0.150	0.150	-0.050	-33.3%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,310	0.150	0.150	0.150	-0.050	-33.3%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	43,691	1.200	1.200	1.200	-0.050	-4.2%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	12,228	1.400	1.400	1.400	-0.050	-3.5%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	12,228	1.400	1.400	1.400	-0.050	-3.5%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	106,779	2.070	2.070	2.070	-0.050	-2.3%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	61,243	2.040	2.040	2.040	-0.050	-2.3%
JORDAN PLASTIC & POLY-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	123,225	2.000	2.000	2.000	-0.050	-2.0%
GRAND TOTAL	13,465,534					

GENERALISED BANKS TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (01/01/1994 - 02/01/1994)						
WEEKLY REPORT						
COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE JD	OPENING CLOSING PRICE JD	PRICE JD	CHANGES JD	PERCENTAGE CHANGE
JORDAN BANK	13,534	1.010	1.010	1.010	-0.050	-4.9%
JORDAN BANK CENTRE	1,642,995	1.400	1.400	1.400	-0.050	-3.6%
JORDAN BANK FOR TRADE CO. LTD	5,258	0.640	0.640	0.640	-0.050	-7.7%
JORDAN BANKING CORPORATION/HOLDING	1,642,995	1.400	1.400	1.400	-0.050	-3.6%
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS CO.	30,363	2.000	2.000	2.000	-0.050	-2.5%
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS CO. LTD	44,210	1.200	1.200	1.200	-0.050	-4.2%
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS CO. LTD	20,370	1.200	1.200	1.200	-0.050	-4.2%
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS CO. LTD	106,779	2.070	2.070	2.070	-0.050	-2.3%
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS CO. LTD	61,243	2.040	2.040	2.040	-0.050	-2.3%
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS CO. LTD	123,225	2.000	2.000	2.000	-0.050	-2.0%
GRAND TOTAL	2,725,493					

Financial Markets						
Jordan Times in cooperation with Cairo Amman Bank						
U.S. Dollar in International Markets						
Currency	New York Close 5/1/1994	Tokyo Close 5/1/1994				
Sterling Pound	1.4875	1.4873				
Deutsche Mark	1.7400	1.7408				
Swiss Franc	1.4797	1.4795				
French Franc	5,9055	5,9087**				
Benchmark Interest Rates	Date: 6/1/1994					
Current	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS		
U.S. Dollar	3.12	3.27	3.46	3.78		
Sterling Pound	5.31	5.18	5.12	5.00		
Deutsche Mark						

World News

Communists and nationalists forming block against reformists — Gaidar

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Economics Minister Yegor Gaidar said nationalist and Communists in Russia's new parliament appeared to be forging a common front against reformists, five days before the legislature's first session.

Mr. Gaidar told Echo Moscow Radio station Thursday night his Russia's Choice bloc, the main reformist grouping in the new State Duma, was pulling out of all-party consultations on the appointment of a speaker.

"In the course of these negotiations, especially in recent days, we have seen the clear emergence of a close coalition of (nationalist) Liberal Democrats, Communists and Agrarians (who are)... imposing their decisions," Mr. Gaidar said.

"We do not want to take part in this," he added.

The prospect of a joint front formed by nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democrats, Communists and conservative Agrarians has haunted President Boris Yeltsin since Dec. 11 elections.

Mr. Yeltsin had gambled that the new State Duma would prove more sympathetic to his market reforms than the old parliament he abolished on Sept. 21. But the elections showed heavy support for ultra-nationalist Zhirinovsky and the Communists.

Seoul sees no quick end to nuclear FROW

SEOUL (R) — North Korea's willingness to allow nuclear inspection could prove a turning point in efforts to end a long-standing dispute over its suspected atomic arms programme, South Korean officials said.

But doubts persist in Seoul whether the recalcitrant Communist state will move quickly to remove suspicions over its programme and return to the negotiating table with South Korea to promote peace on the divided Korean peninsula.

"The North's agreement to allow nuclear inspections is a promising sign that a peaceful solution of the thorny issue may be possible," said Cho Myung-Jae, a Foreign Ministry official.

"But it is just one of many steps; the North must take to completely resolve the nuclear issue...and we should not be overly optimistic," said Mr. Cho.

"The North is so unpredictable and it is really difficult to say the nuclear row will be settled fairly soon," he added.

If efforts to persuade the North to allay fears about its suspected development of an atomic arsenal fail, it could be slapped with international sanctions, U.S. and South Korean officials have said.

This could further increase tensions on the peninsula, site of the world's last cold war frontier, where the United States, China, Russia, and Japan all have strategic long-term interests.

A North Korea watcher in Seoul said the North may resort to delaying tactics in future negotiations with the United States, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and South Korea in a ploy to continue a bombing programme.

"It is premature to say a deal between North Korea and United States over nuclear row," he said.

Undersecretary of State Lynn Davis, briefing reporters at the State Department, said Wednesday the North had agreed in negotiations with the United States to allow inspections of seven declared nuclear sites.

The comments by Mr. Davis, the department's top policymaker on non-proliferation matters, were the first on-the-record confirmation from the United States of any agreement.

But the accord sidesteps a more crucial matter — IAEA access to undeclared sites, especially two nuclear waste dumps that could shed crucial light on whether North Korea has produced nuclear weapons.

In Tokyo, Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa and U.S. Senator Sam Nunn agreed Friday that Tokyo and Washington should both cooperate with Seoul to address North Korea's suspected development of nuclear arms, officials said.

Mr. Gaidar's bloc and other broadly pro-Yeltsin groups, driven by personal rivalries and policy differences, could have serious trouble winning a majority on key legislation.

But Mr. Yeltsin still has cause to hope that enough divides the Communists and ultra-nationalists to prevent them forming a solid anti-government coalition.

His aides are busily courting Communist leaders — something unthinkable before December's elections.

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, not allied to any of the blocs, met Communist Party leaders Thursday.

Friday saw a relative lull in political activity, being the Russian Orthodox Christmas Day and a national holiday.

The Duma speaker, subject of this week's consultations, has more limited powers than the head of the old parliament, Russian Khasbulatov, who is in jail for his part in an Oct. 3 uprising against Mr. Yeltsin.

But Mr. Gaidar was clearly concerned about early signs of cooperation.

"We have much work to do to achieve the formation of a coalition strong enough to prevent the Duma becoming an instrument for the destruction of democracy," Mr. Gaidar said.

The Duma and the Federation Council, parliament's upper

chamber, are scheduled to hold their first sitting Tuesday.

Mr. Yeltsin may address deputies of the two chambers before the sittings in an informal joint assembly.

The president's chief spokesman struck an ominous note in comments Thursday when he said opponents should cooperate with reformers or face a harsh reaction from Mr. Yeltsin.

"We know from the events of Oct. 3 and 4 that the hand of the president can be tough and strong," spokesman Vyacheslav Kostikov said.

Most Moscow residents apparently don't think Mr. Zhirinovsky should hold real power. More than 71 per cent said they would not want him to become prime minister.

Mr. Zhirinovsky's inflammatory rhetoric frightens some Russians, but delights or amuses others. In a vintage performance Thursday, he called American President Bill Clinton a "coward" and said the U.S. president should stay home and play the saxophone instead of coming to Moscow for a summit meeting.

Mr. Zhirinovsky also threatened Japan with a blockade, said French and German leaders have been "sucking up" to Mr. Yeltsin, and called the West "rotten and moldy."

U.S. officials have said Mr. Clinton will not meet with Mr. Zhirinovsky during the Jan. 12-15 summit.

Voters responded by casting more ballots for Mr. Zhirinovsky's misleadingly-named Liberal Democratic Party than for any other party or coalition. But it was not clear whether they really believed Mr. Zhirinovsky and wanted him in power, or they were just

protesting the painful economic policies — and colourless campaigns of President Yeltsin's supporters.

The poll released Friday by the Mnemic (Opinion) Research Service lends support to the protest vote theory.

Two-thirds of the 1,223 Moscow residents questioned by telephone last week said they did not believe Mr. Zhirinovsky could fulfill his promises. Just 10 per cent said they thought he could, and 23 per cent weren't sure.

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her radical black-supremacist group would meet local police chief General Nic Nyman later in the day to inform him of plans to lay a charge of murder against police.

Col. Dowd confirmed that Sam was shot in the back, but said the raid was part of an investigation into terror attacks in Cape Town last year on a restaurant, a church and a pub, confirming that Sam was shot in the back.

He said it would be premature to assume that Sam was shot by police during a clash with a crowd protesting the detention of people wanted for questioning in connection with last week's slaughter of three women and a man in the Heidelberg Tavern, a popular student pub.

PAC spokesman Andra Niso said lawyers were preparing charges against police.

"We demand that Colonel (Leonard) Knipe, Major (Des) Segal and Colonel Dowd must be removed from the investigation of the Heidelberg incident," he said.

Arch. Tutu said in his statement police had a right and a duty to investigate "racist crimes such as the Heidelberg massacre."

"All the people were shot in the back as they ran away from police. I don't hear any warning, I just heard shots being fired," she said.

Ms. De Lille said at a news conference later that leaders of

the government urged people to stay at home and the sandy streets of the seafront capital were empty.

Troops made house-to-house searches for the remnants of a force of more than 100 armed men the government said a crossed from Ghana Wednesday night to assassinate military President Gnassingbe Eyadema.

The government said at least 40 people had been killed. There was no word of casualties from Thursday night's clashes.

Regional carrier Air Afrique said it had cancelled all flights to Lome. The airport was not officially closed but there was no traffic and workers stayed home.

A police statement broadcast by radio Lome said private cars were banned. Only security forces, emergency services, diplomats and journalists were allowed to travel and they would have to submit to inspections at roadblocks.

"Courage, courage and more courage, that's what we wish you this morning," said a Radio Lome announcer.

Man seriously wounded in Belfast

BELFAST (R) — Protestant extremists shot and seriously wounded a Catholic man in Belfast Thursday night after abandoning an attack on another person, police said. Police initially thought the three gunmen from the outlawed Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), who oppose Irish Republican guerrillas fighting British rule, had wounded two people in separate attacks. The man was shot in the arm and back at his home in the Lenadoon area of West Belfast, a police spokesman said. The house was taken over by the UFF gunmen. The UFF claimed responsibility for the attack but it was not clear why it abandoned the attack on the other person. The shooting was the latest violent incident in the battle-scarred province where Irish Republican guerrillas have waged a 25-year campaign to end British rule and reunite Northern Ireland with the Irish Republic to the south.

Russia plane crash killed 125

MOSCOW (AP) — The crash of a Tupolev 154 airliner near the Siberian city of Irkutsk Monday claimed 125 lives instead of 120 as earlier reported, ITAR-TASS News Agency reported Friday. The agency quoted the independent television station NTV as saying the previous toll — 111 passengers and nine crew — did not take into account four persons whose names did not appear on the passengers' list and a man who died when the plane crashed onto his farm. There are frequent cases of passengers making under-the-table payments for their air fares on Russian internal flights. A commission looking into Monday's crash, one of Russia's worst aviation disasters, was to submit its preliminary findings on Jan. 15, ITAR-TASS said.

Sting, Billy Joel lead list of Grammy nominees

NEW YORK (R) — Mainstream recording stars Sting and Billy Joel led the pack in Grammy Award nominations, with each garnering nominations for album, record and song of the year.

Sting earned a total of six nominations and Joel, with four.

The 36th annual awards ceremony by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences will be held at New York's Radio City Music Hall on March 1.

Sting and Joel led an eclectic list of nominees for major awards that included Neil Young, R.E.M., Meat Loaf, the theme from Aladdin, and Whitney Houston's theme album to The Bodyguard in the music industry's most prestigious awards.

Sting was also nominated for Best Music Video — Long Form, Best Male Pop Vocal Performance and Best Solo Rock Vocal Performance Categories, competing with Joel in the Pop Vocal Performance category.

Jaclyn Jackson earned nominations for Best Rhythm and Blues Song and Best Female Rhythm and Blues Vocal Performance. Her



A man lies the blanket covering the 13-year-old boy killed by police gunfire in a Cape Town township (AFP photo)

PAC to meet police over Cape Town killing

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa's Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) Friday condemned the killing of a 13-year-old boy in violence triggered by the arrests of suspects to last week's Cape Town pub killing.

Anglican Archbishop and Nobel Peace Laureate Desmond Tutu angrily condemned the shooting and said in a statement police were going out of their way to harass the PAC.

The boy, Siphiwo Sam, was killed and six people including a six-year-old child were wounded when members of the police Murder and Robbery Squad fired rubber bullets and shotguns in Cape Town's Guguletu township late Thursday.

Police Colonel Raymond Dowd said police felt compelled to fire rubber bullets and shotguns when they came under attack from youths throwing rocks and chanting "war, war."

PAC executive member Patricia De Lille told reporters about 50 armed police raided a PAC election meeting, detained nine youths and allowed a police dog to bite people in a crowd angered by the arrests.

The government urged people to stay at home and the sandy streets of the seafront capital were empty.

Troops made house-to-house searches for the remnants of a force of more than 100 armed men the government said a crossed from Ghana Wednesday night to assassinate military President Gnassingbe Eyadema.

The government said at least 40 people had been killed. There was no word of casualties from Thursday night's clashes.

Regional carrier Air Afrique said it had cancelled all flights to Lome. The airport was not officially closed but there was no traffic and workers stayed home.

A police statement broadcast by radio Lome said private cars were banned. Only security forces, emergency services, diplomats and journalists were allowed to travel and they would have to submit to inspections at roadblocks.

"Courage, courage and more courage, that's what we wish you this morning," said a Radio Lome announcer.

Spy scandal linked to Italian president

ROME (R) — Italian Interior Minister Nicola Mancino said Friday that press allegations linking President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro to a scandal over secret service funds were an attempt to delay landmark general elections. "This story is nothing other than a shameful attempt to get at the head of state... and delay the elections," Mr. Mancino said in an interview published in the newspaper La Repubblica. Arrested former spy Maurizio Broccoletti alleged Tuesday that Mr. Scalfaro and Mr. Mancino were involved in trying to push up a scandal over alleged embezzlement from an annual \$35 million fund held by the SISDE civilian secret service. The scandal, which first erupted late last year, has resurfaced as Scalfaro prepares to dissolve Italy's scandal-ridden parliament and set a date for general elections. Opposition parties called this week in talks with Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi for the elections, under a new first-past-the-post system, to be held in late March or April. The country's discredited former coalition partners, eager for time to regroup, want the polls to be held in June.

Man seriously wounded in Belfast

BELFAST (R) — Protestant extremists shot and seriously wounded a Catholic man in Belfast Thursday night after abandoning an attack on another person, police said. Police initially thought the three gunmen from the outlawed Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), who oppose Irish Republican guerrillas fighting British rule, had wounded two people in separate attacks. The man was shot in the arm and back at his home in the Lenadoon area of West Belfast, a police spokesman said. The house was taken over by the UFF gunmen. The UFF claimed responsibility for the attack but it was not clear why it abandoned the attack on the other person. The shooting was the latest violent incident in the battle-scarred province where Irish Republican guerrillas have waged a 25-year campaign to end British rule and reunite Northern Ireland with the Irish Republic to the south.

Russia plane crash killed 125

MOSCOW (AP) — The crash of a Tupolev 154 airliner near the Siberian city of Irkutsk Monday claimed 125 lives instead of 120 as earlier reported, ITAR-TASS News Agency reported Friday. The agency quoted the independent television station NTV as saying the previous toll — 111 passengers and nine crew — did not take into account four persons whose names did not appear on the passengers' list and a man who died when the plane crashed onto his farm. There are frequent cases of passengers making under-the-table payments for their air fares on Russian internal flights. A commission looking into Monday's crash, one of Russia's worst aviation disasters, was to submit its preliminary findings on Jan. 15, ITAR-TASS said.

Sting, Billy Joel lead list of Grammy nominees

NEW YORK (R) — Mainstream recording stars Sting and Billy Joel led the pack in Grammy Award nominations, with each garnering nominations for album, record and song of the year.

Sting earned a total of six nominations and Joel, with four.

The 36th annual awards ceremony by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences will be held at New York's Radio City Music Hall on March 1.

Sting and Joel led an eclectic list of nominees for major awards that included Neil Young, R.E.M., Meat Loaf, the theme from Aladdin, and Whitney Houston's theme album to The Bodyguard in the music industry's most prestigious awards.

Sting was also nominated for Best Music Video — Long Form, Best Male Pop Vocal Performance and Best Solo Rock Vocal Performance Categories, competing with Joel in the Pop Vocal Performance category.

Jaclyn Jackson earned nominations for Best Rhythm and Blues Song and Best Female Rhythm and Blues Vocal Performance. Her

Hollywood madam names some names

NEW YORK (APP) — Hollywood Madam Heidi Fleiss named actor Charlie Sheen and producer Jon Peters as free-spending clients and said TV actress Shannen Doherty once tried to hire prostitutes for a fiance's bachelor party.

Sheen liked to have a blonde dress up as a cheerleader and pretend she had a big game the next day. Fleiss told Vanity Fair, adding that the actor was a gentleman who liked to hire girls whenever he had his friends over. "He'd pay for all his friends," she said. "They want to be studs. They don't want to say they pay for sex."

Four homes in the northern suburb of Roseville were reportedly to have exploded.

Many more there and in neighbouring suburbs fringing the bush were burning and thousands had been evacuated in the swirling firestorm.

No deaths were reported,

but ambulance services said 14 people, including a number of firefighters, had been taken to hospital to be treated for smoke inhalation, dehydration and exhaustion.

A college at nearby Kurrajong was on fire, a shopping centre in the suburb of Marsfield 16 kilometres from the city centre was reportedly under threat and the Blue Mountains to the west were blazing.

An enormous cloud of smoke reduced visibility virtually to zero through much of Sydney's north shore, which includes some of its most exclusive suburbs, and traffic was almost at a standstill.

Major roads and northern train services were cut and power supplies were interrupted as fires tore at the city's main arteries.</

Viberg seeks to overtake Wachter in World Cup

LITENMARKT, Austria (R) — Swede Pernilla Viberg could deprive Anita Wachter the overall World Cup lead for the first time this season if she keeps up her superb recent run in the Alpine ski races this weekend.

Wachter, the defending champion, has seen her lead gradually eroded since she ended the season in stunning style with two wins and three second places in the first six events.

Viberg is now only 16 points behind her Austrian rival in standing, thanks to her win in Morzine Thursday when Wachter finished only 12th, a worst slalom placing of the season.

Altenmarkt is hosting a slalom and a super-giant slalom, both events at which Viberg excels.

The 23-year-old Swede took super-G gold at the 1988 Calgary Olympics and leads this season's slalom standings after two wins and one second place.

Viberg's perfect run-up to next month's Lillehammer Olympics, where she will defend the giant slalom title, promises a sharp contrast with last season when she missed much of the action because of an Achilles tendon injury.

If the Swede should miss her race this weekend, Wachter could still find herself under pressure from another quarter, when Swiss Vreni Schneider took second place in Morzine and has won two other slaloms this season.

Technical specialist Schneider, who has 46 World Cup wins in a 10-year career, lies in third place in the overall standings with 598 points, against Wachter's 646.

They don't seem to be the same skier as last year, but they may be.

Altenmarkt is hosting a

slalom and a super-giant slalom, both events at which Viberg excels.

Seizinger, super-G world

champion last year, has been

below par this season although

she managed a third place in

the Flachau super-giant and

second in the Tignes downhill

in December.

France's Carole Merle, 1993

giant slalom world champion

and silver medalist at the

super-G at the last Olympics,

has also been fighting to regain

her form.

Her best result this season

has been third in the opening

giant slalom and in the only

previous super-G, in Flachau

last month, she finished only

39th.

Another disappointment,

25th place in Wednesday's

giant slalom in Morzine,

prompted the announcement

that she had parted company

with her trainer and might

drop out of the Olympics.

Meanwhile, Jenni Meno and Todd Sand the favourites in

the U.S. Figure Skating

Championships won the

technical programme Thurs-

day.

Maleeva, Davenport reach

Australian hardcourt semis

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) — Rising young stars Magdalena Maleeva and Lindsay Davenport advanced to the semifinals of the Australian Women's Hardcourt Tennis Championships Friday.

Interest in the tournament with a 7-6 (97), 6-4 victory over Michelle Jaggard-Lai.

Labat, ranked 51 in the

world, has been one of the few

players who have coped in the

heatwave conditions.

In the first quarterfinal,

Taipei's Shi-Ting Wang upset

third-seeded Ukrainian Natalia

Medvedeva 6-1, 3-6, 6-2 to

reach the semifinals for the

second straight year.

Wang will face the tourna-

ment's second seed, American

Lindsay Davenport, who beat

Germany's Barbara Rittner 6-

4, 6-4.

Maleeva, 18, will face

Argentina's Florencia Labat in

Saturday's semifinals after

Labat ended Australian in-

4.

Seles to miss Australian Open

CLEVELAND, Ohio (Agen-

cies) — Tennis star Monica

Seles will pass up the Aus-

tralian Open while she continues

to recuperate from a stab

wound, the former world num-

ber one said Thursday in a

brief statement released by her

managers.

"It is extremely difficult for

me to miss another Grand

Slam Tournament, but I won't

be ready to play in the Aus-

tralian Open this year," Seles,

a three-time Australian Open

champion, said through her

agent at International Manage-

ment Group (IMG).

Seles, 18, will face

Argentina's Florencia Labat in

Saturday's semifinals after

Labat ended Australian in-

4.

Seles is undergoing an

aggressive rehabilitation and

training programme, but it is

still too soon to determine

when she will return to the

professional women's tennis

circuit, the IMG statement

said.

The statement from Seles

comes on the day that U.S.

figure skating champion Nancy

Kerrigan was attacked by a

spectator wielding a blunt ob-

ject following a practice ses-

sion for this week's national

championships in Detroit.

A spokeswoman for Seles at

IMG said the tennis star's deci-

sion to pass up the Australian

Open was not related to the

troubling attack on Kerrigan.

The absence of Seles leaves

the Australian Open without

three of the biggest drawcards

in women's tennis.

Martina Navratilova no longer

plays the Australian Open,

saying it falls too early in the

year.

Seles is undergoing intensive

treatment for an inflamed

right knee.

Tennis Australia President

Geoff Pollard, in Perth for the

Hopman Cup, said the open

was fortunate to still have one

of its strongest-ever entries.

"We are obviously dis-

appointed that Monica won't

be here to chase her fourth

successive title, but we are very

pleased to have 27 of the top 30

women and 25 of the top 30

men," he said.

Pollard said preparations for

the tournament are proceeding

well, despite unusually wet

weather in Melbourne, which

has delayed the painting and

cleaning of outside match

courts.

"Everything is beginning to

take shape," Pollard said.

"Our team is working very

hard to make sure all last

minute details are finalised.

When declarer innocently ran

the third hand in dummy, communications between the hands were shattered. All South needed to do was get home to ruff. If the opponents continue with hearts, declarer ruff in hand and there are no further problems, if East ruffs and shifts to a club, declarer can win in dummy, use dummy's trump as the entry to the closed hand to draw trumps, then take three diamond tricks for the game.

No one can quibble with the

situation, especially since South held 150 honors as a cushion. And given that

Czechs seal victory in Hopman Cup

PERTH, Australia (AP) — The top seeded Czech Republic took less than three hours here Friday night to overwhelm Germany in the final of the Hopman Cup tennis mixed teams' tournament.

Jana Novotna, ranked sixth in the world, and Petr Korda, ranked 12th, were too strong for the unseeded Anke Huber and Bernd Karbacher. The winners shared a cheque of 200,000 Australian dollars (\$141,000) and the losers (\$100,000).

The writing was on the wall for Germany, the titleholders, when Novotna recovered from a disastrous start to beat 10th-ranked Huber, 1-6, 6-4, 6-3 in the women's singles.

Lanky left-hander Korda wrapped up the match when he overpowered Karbacher in

straight sets, 6-3, 6-4.

However, Huber and Karbacher won the "dead" mixed doubles rubber 8-3 to regain a degree of pride for Germany. Korda, who won the Grand Slam Cup in Munich last month, was in devastating form, winning his match in only 67 minutes.

He compared the win here with his triumph in Munich, saying: "There I was playing up because I was again men above me in the rankings."

"Here I was playing down, and there was pressure on me. I was happy with the way I handled it."

Karbacher said: "Sometimes I felt a little bit like a spectator on the court. He was hitting forehand and backhand winners and I did not know what to do."

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